

## Dr. Burgess Special Address March 22, 2018 Funding our Government

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Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

Today, the U.S. House of Representatives considered an appropriations bill to fund our Armed Forces, the federal government, and other essential services and programs. Here are just a few examples. In addition to fully funding our national defense at the levels General Mattis requested and authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY18, the bill also provides a pay increase -the highest ever - for our troops who sacrifice so much to protect Americans at home and abroad.

Further, the bill includes investments to improve school safety. Particularly in the wake of recent attacks, it is important that we ensure schools across our nation have the resources they need to keep students safe. The bill also continues funding for President Trump's priority of a secure border.

The bill includes many other commonsense priorities. Over the past year, I have devoted much of my time to finding solutions for our nation's opioid crisis. Alongside President Trump, Congress is stepping up to help stop this "Crisis Next Door." The appropriations bill passed today invests nearly \$4 billion in resources to help end this epidemic – including treatment, prevention, and law enforcement efforts to stop the spread of these dangerous drugs and help families affected by opioid abuse to get the help they need.

While I am supportive of Congress' efforts to secure funding for these priorities, I must acknowledge that the process by which we pass funding legislation is broken. The Senate must reconsider the 60-vote requirement for spending bills. The House actually completed this work six months ago, and Senate Democrats have held hostage this process by using the 60-vote requirement as a blocking strategy. Clearly they have weaponized the appropriations process. Along with many North Texans, I have concerns about our national spending; however, while this appropriations bill is not perfect, it is necessary. Today, Congress delivered on our responsibility to fund our national defense and the crucial services upon which North Texans and all Americans rely. Moving forward, I will continue to fight for a better appropriations process.

As always, I appreciate your comments and your concerns on this issue or any other issue. May God bless you and your family and as the song says, God bless you Texas.